depends on his herds: they are his only resource, his only wealth, and his only pride. When two nomads meet, whether they are Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Mongols, or Tibetans, the first subject that comes up is their cattle. Among nomads, social status is established by the possession of horses, camels, and livestock in general, and only secondarily determined by titles or descent. This is especially true for the Kirghiz, Kazakhs and Tibetans, and to a lesser degree for the Mongols, among whom aristocratic birth (real or imagined) plays an important role.

The average nomad's life can be described as follows: he lives in a roomy felt tent, furnished with house altar, in the case of Buddhists, or with an artistically made book-stand for the Quran in the case of Muslims, and some chests and carpets. The whole family takes care of the livestock, and periodically the migration unit moves during the summer time from pasture to pasture, preserving the richest and most protected grazing land for the winter time. The weather plays a fatal role in the welfare of the nomad's livestock, and every so often a migration unit (the ail, the aul, the ayir, the omoq, otoq, xotn, or uruq, the ulus or even the aimaq) loses its livestock. In this case, those clans which still own enough livestock divide their herds and lend part of them to those who suffered the loss. Collective cooperation is exercised in this respect by Kazakhs, Kirghiz and Mongols, while the nomadic Tibetans, in a similar situation, have quite a reputation for robbing neighboring tribes of their livestock.

The nomadic way of life, the close contact with nature and dependence on nature promotes animism, shamanism, and spiritualism, which goes hand in hand with the prevailing religions of Islam (in the case of the Kirghiz, Kazakhs, Salars, and some Tibetan clans) and Buddhism (in the case of the Mongols, Tibetans, and Sarigh-Uighurs). As a general rule, the nomadic Kirghiz and Kazakh are not very fanatic or ardent Muslims, and neither are the Mongols very pious Buddhists, but still, both feel strongly about their religious although they are rather lax in their observance. No matter how poor a Buddhistic nomad is, he voluntarily supports and feeds wandering lamas, invites several on major occasions (birth, death, and marriage if the bride's father can afford it), pays them, and finally is accustomed to the old tradition ot giving a small percentage of his livestock every year to Buddhistic monasteries. All nomads are very superstitious, and the relationship between cause and effect is often misinterpreted, e.g., in the case of disease or weather. It is safe to say that the dominant motives of the nomads are economic in the first place and religious in the second place.

/The Tibetans/

*563 [197] race, the Hsi-fans of the country west of T'ao-chao speak the Tibetan language and are as much Tibetans as the inhabitants of any other portion of the Tibetan plateau. They come into contact [177] with the Koko Nor Mongols farther north, whom they bully and plunder. Unlike the Mongols, who are being pushed back every- [648] where along the northern borders of China by Chinese agriculturalists, the Tibetans of the Kansu border hold their own [181] against the Chinese colonists. The northeastern Tibetans are truculent and independent as compared to the Mongols, and they take readily and successfully to farming.

[142] There appear to be two physical types in Tibet, the short, round-faced Mongoloid type, and the tall Aryan type with prominent features. The latter type is common among the Tibetans of [291] Amdo. The eastern Tibetan, even though he is in Chinese dress, [177] may be readily recognized by his peculiar habit of standing with [516] his feet turned out at right angles to his body.

[181] On the whole, these people are hardy, independent, and cautious with strangers, but they are also notably hospitable.

2. Patterns of living

*563 a. Dwelling

342 Like all nomads, the Tibetans have no fixed homes. They live in rectangular tents usually made of yak hair instead of felt, with wooden framework. The bottoms of the tents are made fast with iron pins or animal horns. Mud, stone or dry dung is built up around the tent to keep off wind and snow.

*563 The interior arrangement varies little from tent to tent. A 342 mud stove is in the middle, a Buddha image at the left side. On 352 wooden shelves along the walls are chests and boxes where food 353 and clothing are stored. Skin bags of butter, tsamba or flour, and saddles and rifles also hang along the walls. Shelves on the right side hold pans, water buckets, kettles, bowls, cups, a [237] stone mill and a few skin bags. Near the door there is usually a [372] heap of dried ox dung for fuel.

b. Food

*563 Farm products do not grow in the cold climate and high alti- 262 tude, and transportation is difficult. Thus there is little variety [241] in foodstuffs, and eating and drinking are simple functions. The [489] daily fare is beef, mutton and other domestic meats, fresh and sour milk, butter, cheese, noodles, tsamba (parched barley meal) and tea.

*563 There are no regular meal times in most households. In 264 winter when the days are short, they may eat three meals a day; in spring and summer, perhaps four or five. During the day they [262] eat tsamba and sour milk. The evening meal is noodles with boiled beef or mutton, though the poor can have noodles and beef less often.

Rich and poor eat with their hands, though the Tu-kung (chief

797 or Ching-chiao pei in Chinese, which stands at Sian, varifies
[211] the fact that this church had been established among the Chinese
people of Shensi Province. This early Christian movement in
[798] Northwest China suffered persecution and died out. In modern
times both the Catholic and Protestant Churches came to the
Northwest. Most of their converts have been Chinese. Until the
Communist period the Catholic Church had been very strong in
one place in Ninghsia Province. It rendered many kinds of
service to its members and had a much stronger control over
them than did the local government. To a great extent it had
trespassed the jurisdiction of the government, which had cre-
ated considerable resentment and suspicion among the authori-
ties and the general populace. (See Social Structure.)

771 Though subscribing to all important religions in varying pro-
portions, the Chinese in the Northwest, like those in other
provinces, seem rather materialistic. Nowhere among them is
there found a religious fervor and devotion which characterize
both the Moslems and the Tibetans of this part of Asia. How-
ever, the religious atmosphere is very strong in all aspects of
communal life, which are always cloaked with some religious
771 rite. For example, the village or community theatrical has a
536 great deal of religious implication. Although unlike the miracle
545 plays and so-called devil dances of the Tibetans, the plays are
usually straight drama, frequently historical, the primary sig-
nificance of the presentation is a religious one. They give the
gods pleasure and thus dispose them favorably toward the people
of the community. Even the mask and the animal plays of the
New Year's celebration have a definite religious significance.

771 Chinese home life is also mixed with religious or semi-
769 religious feelings. Regardless of its wealth or locale, a Chinese
home will have its ancestral tablets in the place of honor. The
[353] tablets represent those who have gone and keeps them and their
memory always present. Those living now are only the present
custodians of the family name.

[592] "This belief. . . holds the members of one household togeth-
[614] er with strands which are not so much woven by affection as by
a sense of mutual responsibility within a clan. . .

771 "At New Year the shack living room, miserable though it be,
796 is the scene of the most exact rituals when, in absolutely cor-
592 rect order, each member of the family makes obeisance to the
782 elders; the feasts fixed by the Chinese calendar are scrupulous-
ly observed, and I have known a man to carry a watermelon for
days across the desert in order that at the Feast of the Moon,
in the most desolate of wayside stages, he might put an old
rickety table in the courtyard and offer the melon, cut in slices,
to the Queen of Heaven.

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927
AF13 Northwest China AF13

arranged that we should spend July among them under canvas, in Tibetan territory.

CHAPTER IX

A SPRING CAMPAIGN

MARCO POLO wrote of the city of Kanchow, where he made long residence, and once held office as Governor, as the 'city which holds more gods than men.' This local saying is still constantly on the lips of its inhabitants, who take great pride in the fact that its temples and shrines are so numerous as never to have been accurately numbered.

The town is beautifully placed and abundantly watered. It contains several lakes, which being overgrown with reeds supply material for an important mat-plaiting industry. Besides these larger expanses of water, there are a number of ponds fed by underground springs, dependent upon the melting snow from the Tibetan mountains. In these ponds the water rises and falls in a most unexpected way, so that sometimes their banks are surrounded by children fishing, while at others they become the highway of city traffic. The streets are bordered with fine poplar, acacia, and willow trees, which flourish splendidly, throwing their roots deep into the hidden sources.

As one would expect, the people are in all things superstitious and religious. All the wealthy homes have a private shrine, which is often a handsome hall, where the ancestral tablets are preserved, and where incense is burned to the family idols. At sunset each day the sound of bells rises on every side, as the woman of each household touches the rope which sets in motion